DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 297 067 UD 026 298

AUTHOR Mei, Dolores M.; And Others
TITLE City-as-School High School National Diffusion Network Developer/Demonstrator Project End-of-Year-Report 1986-1987. OEA Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn. Office of Educational Assessment.
PUB DATE Jan 88
NOTE 22p.; For related documents, see ED 281 942-943.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Dropout Prevention; High Schools; *Management Development; Models; *Nontraditional Education; Program Administration; *Program Development; *Staff Development; Validated Programs
IDENTIFIERS *City as School Program; *National Diffusion Network Programs; Program Expansion; Program Objectives; Program Replication

ABSTRACT

City-as-School (CAS) is an alternative high school linking students to various out-of-school learning experiences throughout New York City. In 1985, the CAS was awarded a National Diffusion Network (NDN) four-year replication grant, given to exemplary programs to enable them to disseminate their model to other interested schools and districts throughout the country. The 1986-87 school year represented CAS's second full year of replication activities. In contrast to 1985-86, when CAS/NDN team members attended several general educational conferences, in 1986-87 initial awareness sessions took place only at alternative schools and NDN conferences, or at state governors' conferences that CAS was officially invited to attend. Eight districts around the country were selected for 1986-87 training as replicators, and will begin replication activities in fall 1987. The project's follow-up support, technical assistance, and in-service training objectives were achieved. CAS addressed the recommendations made in last year's Office of Educational Assessment report with the result that increased staffing and the addition of a full-time director have given the replication program a tighter structure with clearer objectives; also, the addition of replicator districts in New Jersey, Alaska, and Washington, D.C., has given the project a broader, more balanced geographical spread. Recommendations for next year are offered. (BJV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CITY-AS-SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL

NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK

DEVELOPER/DEMONSTRATOR PROJECT

END-OF-YEAR-REPORT

1986-1987

OEA Evaluation Report

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert Tobias
N.Y.C. Board of Education

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Evaluation Section Report
Robert Tobias, Administrator
John E. Schoener, Senior Manager

January, 1988

CITY-AS-SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL

NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK

DEVELOPER/DEMONSTRATOR PROJECT

END-OF-YEAR-REPORT

1986-1987

Prepared by the
High School Evaluation Unit

Dolores M. Mei
Evaluation Manager

James Langlois
Evaluation Specialist

John Berman
Evaluation Consultant

New York City Public Schools
Office of Educational Assessment
Richard Guttenberg, Director

It is the policy of the Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, national origin, age, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or sex, in its educational programs, activities, and employment policies, as required by law. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact: Carole Guerra, Local Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Office of Educational Assessment, 110 Livingston Street, Room 743, Brooklyn, New York 11201. Inquiries regarding compliance with appropriate laws may also be directed to: Mercedes A. Nesfield, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, 110 Livingston Street, Room 601, Brooklyn, New York; or the Director, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 26 Federal Plaza, Room 33-130, New York, New York 10278.

SUMMARY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

City-as-School (C.A.S.) is an alternative high school linking students to various out-of-school learning experiences throughout New York City. In 1985, C.A.S. was awarded a National Diffusion Network (N.D.N.) four-year replication grant by the U.S. Department of Education. The award is given to exemplary educational programs to enable them to disseminate their model to other interested schools and districts throughout the country. The 1986-87 school year represented C.A.S.'s second full year of replication activities.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In contrast to 1985-86, when C.A.S./N.D.N. team members attended several general educational conferences, in 1986-87 initial awareness sessions only took place at alternative school and N.D.N. conferences or at state governors conferences that C.A.S was officially invited to attend. Districts that were interested in replicating the C.A.S. model called or wrote to the director to receive additional material and to make appointments for a follow-up awareness session. Eight districts -- three in Alaska and one each in Hawaii, New Jersey, and Washington D.C.-- were selected and made commitments for 1986-87 training as replicators. Three-day training sessions were held in each of the new districts. These districts will begin replication activities in fall, 1987.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project's follow-up support, technical assistance and in-service training objectives were achieved. The C.A.S./N.D.N. team deemed two other objectives requiring them to train replicator staff to become disseminators and to monitor the progress of the replicators as inappropriate at this time. This decision also precluded monitoring of disseminators.

C.A.S. did address the recommendations made in last year's O.E.A. report. Increased staffing and the addition of a full-time director have given the replication program a tighter structure with clearer objectives. The addition of replicator districts in New Jersey, Alaska, and Washington, D.C., has given the project a broader, more balanced geographic spread, an effort that should be continued. Travel time has been consolidated because the director has had continual phone and mail contact with replicating districts. Also, whenever possible training and awareness sessions at different sites were combined in one visit to a particular geographic area.

The following recommendations are made based on the second year evaluation findings:

- Program administrators should attempt to impress upon their B.O.D supervisors and grant project manager the importance of resources to develop a systematic monitoring plan to evaluate and assess replication efforts. They should develop standardized evaluative materials that can be applied to all districts to assess the progress of the programs.

- C.A.S. staff should develop an informational packet of training materials. Resources utilized in sessions should be pulled together and made more public and accessible.

- Appropriate C.A.S. and replicator staff should formulate a formal plan for providing systematic technical assistance and "turn key" training to specified target districts assuming that appropriate resources can be allocated to this activity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Project Background	1
Project Objectives	2
Evaluation Methodology	2
Scope of this Report	3
II. PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION	4
Awareness Activities	4
Selection	7
Training	8
III. OUTCOMES	11
Providing Follow-up Support and Selecting New Districts	11
Providing In-Service Training	11
Technical Assistance	12
Turn-Key Training, and Monitoring	12
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	14

I. INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

City-as-School (C.A.S.) is an alternative high school whose primary curricular objective is to link students with various out-of-school learning experiences throughout New York City. The program offers a small core of in-house classes for enrichment and remediation, but most students spend at least 95 percent of their school time at field-based learning sites such as business, civic, cultural, and governmental organizations. Although all high school students are eligible to transfer to City-as-School, intake data on transferees demonstrates that the school is most likely to attract those whose needs and learning styles have not been satisfied by traditional high schools. A majority of incoming students have been truants, drop-outs, or at risk of dropping out.

Believing that its innovative approach to the widespread problem of high school attrition was effective and applicable elsewhere, City-as-School applied in 1978, under Title IV-C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, for a dissemination grant in New York State. The program was validated, and the school applied to the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (J.D.R.P.) for national validation, which was awarded both for dropout prevention and vocational education. This validation led, in 1985, to the award of a National Diffusion Network (N.D.N.)

replication grant for 1985-86. This grant was extended for 1986-87 at the N.D.N. annual conference and the budget was increased.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Second-year implementation objectives for the replication project were to:

- provide follow-up support to the replication efforts that began in 1985-86 and to continue selecting additional districts interested in becoming C.A.S. adopters;
- provide in-service personnel training to staff of replicator districts that would enable them to implement the C.A.S. model;
- assist with curriculum implementation and provide technical assistance to replicating districts as needed;
- provide "turn-key"* training to key staff of the replicator districts, preparing them to train additional districts as subsequent replicators; and

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Office of Educational Assessment (O.E.A.) examined the implementation process in order to determine the extent to which each of the five objectives was attained and to identify areas where changes in the replication process would enhance the quality of the program. O.E.A. gathered information from written logs, reports, and reaction sheets assembled or prepared by the staff and from a personal interview with the project director. An assistant principal of City-as-School also attended and contributed to the discussions.

---

*A "turn-key" site is one whose staff are trained to replicate the model. These staff members subsequently receive additional training to prepare them to serve as trainers in other replicating districts.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

In Chapter II the organization and implementation of the project is presented. The achievement of project objectives is assessed in Chapter III. Conclusions and recommendations are offered in Chapter IV.

II. PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

C.A.S.'s replication staff included a full-time director who was responsible for all administrative decisions affecting the project. She corresponded with potential replicators and represented the project at N.D.N. conferences. Four C.A.S. faculty members participated in the demonstration/replication process as field site trainers and liaisons to identified districts. In addition, the principal and assistant principal functioned as part of the replication team, conducting awareness sessions and using their contacts to identify potential replicators.

AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

In 1985-86, the first year of the replication project, there was no full-time director and all staff members involved in awareness activities were given release-time from other responsibilities at C.A.S. to facilitate outreach efforts. In part because no single individual was exclusively involved with the dissemination program, there were some problems that hindered the effectiveness of its awareness activities. The most salient examples included: 1) repeated travel to different sites in the same geographic area; 2) staff energy expended on generic educational conferences where there was little real interest in the C.A.S. replication project; and 3) direct mail to school

districts which generated very few responses.

The addition of a full-time director in 1986-87, the second year of replication, meant that one person had primary responsibility for initiating and developing all awareness projects. Initial sessions designed to introduce the C.A.S. model to potential replicators were virtually always scheduled and conducted by the director. Other team members were again given release-time to work on the project.

In 1986-87, initial awareness activities consisted of a two-hour presentation by the director describing the program. This included a question-and-answer session. Districts and individuals left this presentation with a packet of program-related materials. Those interested in a second awareness session made calls or wrote to the director, who acted on each response. A contact file was maintained on all districts and state facilitators who indicated any degree of interest in C.A.S.

The C.A.S./N.D.N. Project Director arranged to conduct a more detailed secondary awareness session with districts that expressed interest in potential replication. These secondary awareness sessions were optimally five hours in duration. Occasionally, the director rejected a request for secondary awareness because she believed that the district lacked a serious understanding of the scope of the replication process. Staff presented the timeframe for both training and replication in a telephone conversation to districts before making a trip to the site. The director stated that the more extensive awareness activities have cut down on

travel to sites that had a very small probability of becoming replicators. Thus, the addition of a full-time director combined with the knowledge gained from a year of experience contributed to an awareness process that was better organized.

In contrast to 1985-86, C.A.S. sent little direct mail to school districts. In addition, the director reported that, with a few exceptions, rather than presenting at general educational conferences, where experience proved that interest in the C.A.S. model was limited, the program only made awareness presentations at alternative school, N.D.N., and state governors' conferences to which C.A.S. had been invited. C.A.S. made these changes in order to begin their dissemination activities with an audience of already interested people and organizations so that staff time could be used more efficiently. The staff also sought to create awareness through articles published in professional journals and the mass media. Two of the C.A.S. staff participated in an N.D.N.-produced teleconference program and replication staff have also utilized a piece on C.A.S. produced by a major television network. A Board of Education-sponsored video is currently in progress that will also be used for general awareness activities.

State N.D.N. facilitators have been keys to developing implementation districts. Interested facilitators in California, Alaska, Hawaii, Illinois, West Virginia, Virginia, New Jersey and Washington, D.C. were contacted by the director at the National N.D.N. Conference.

SELECTION

The director has identified four key elements for successful replicator districts. The potential replicator must:

- identify a resource coordinator or someone functioning in that role;
- develop a curriculum that utilizes field placements in the community such as in businesses, social service agencies, and local public offices;
- design a student advisement system that enhances learning that takes place in field placements; and
- develop specialized classes that the external sites cannot provide (e.g., remedial classes, physical education, other state requirements).

In addition, replicators must possess high interest and adequate resources. Project staff inferred interest levels from each district's initiative in following up on the initial awareness materials. Those that issued invitations asking project staff to come for a personal presentation and made key staff members available were judged to be sufficiently interested.

According to the project director there was no limit to the number of states that could have districts serve as replicators this year. The two key factors that went into developing replicator districts were having state facilitators who were especially responsive and identifying states that had monies available for "at risk" programs.

Virtually all replication efforts were directed towards state facilitators who expressed initial interest during the

course of the year. In addition, C.A.S. used the N.D.N. National Conference in January, 1987 to target potential disseminating districts. The second year of the project expanded the number of replicators to six states: Alaska, California, Maine, New Jersey, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia. C.A.S. anticipates the likelihood of third-year replication agreements in Vermont, Oregon, Virginia, and West Virginia.

C.A.S. staff determined the adequacy of resources by means of an "Implementation Plan" which interested districts completed and signed. The plan specified the amount of money, the personnel, and the materials to be committed to the replication. A signed Implementation Plan was considered a contract to replicate. Eight such agreements were signed in 1986-87: Mantica and Willets, California; East Orange, New Jersey; Washington, D.C.; Honolulu, Hawaii; and Fairbanks, Juneau, and Anchorage, Alaska. The previous year, 1985-86, agreements to replicate were made by districts in Augusta, Brunswick, Gardiner, and Sanford Maine as well as Ventura and Sacramento, California.

Since City-as-School is validated by J.D.R.P. as a model for all districts with secondary schools, the selection criteria could not exclude districts by using such considerations as district size, pupil performance, drop-out rates, socioeconomics, or demographics as qualifying factors.

TRAINING

Project staff held three-day on-site training sessions for

the eight districts that signed Implementation Agreements. Training of districts is usually conducted within six months of their identification as replicators. A large amount of the training time involved helping replicator districts develop curriculum which utilizes local community resources and connects the school system with those resources.

The training utilized a structured curriculum and materials developed by the project staff to insure uniformity despite the use of different trainers. The sessions were generally structured in the following manner:

- Day I - General Introduction, development of resources. Local district team members took the C.A.S. resource coordinator on a tour of the local community. The resource coordinator subsequently worked with replication team members to identify the methods by which community resources can be developed into Learning Experience Activity Packages (LEAPs). The C.A.S./N.D.N. trainer helped the team determine the best ways to utilize the unique qualities of the community to benefit the school program. The resource coordinator then assisted the district implementors in developing stronger and more formal links with local businesses, public officials, and community agencies, and identifying potential problem areas that the community might be facing.

- Day II - Resource Coordinators and district team members took a tour of the school site and discussed the manner in which the physical plant could best be utilized. Administrative concerns that the district replicators had were then addressed and discussed by C.A.S. staff. During the afternoon session team members were asked to write a LEAP on their own that would be appropriate to the resources they had developed in their community. The day ended with a discussion of teacher roles, seminar development, and in-school instructional responsibilities.

- Day III - The morning sessions during the third day of training usually consisted of a general question-and-answer session covering everything that had gone on thus

far. Discussion tended to foucs on "nuts and bolts" details necessary for successful implementation. Team members then developed their third LEAP proposal. The afternoon session dealt with guidance and support services and their role in replicating the C.A.S. model. The trainer made a formal presentation followed by a general discussion with questions and answers. The day ended with team members writing their fourth and final LEAP and an overall evaluation of the training program.

III. OUTCOMES

PROVIDING FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT AND SELECTING NEW DISTRICTS

Follow-up support to districts selected in 1985-86 consisted of informal responses to occasional requests for help with admissions, guidance, and curriculum. While C.A.S. responded to individual requests, the project did not perceive extensive and systematic follow-up support as a significant need. City-as-School categorizes a signed Implementation Plan as the completed selection of a district. Eight districts signed Implementation Plans in 1986-87. These will begin their replication activities during the 1987-88 school year. These additional districts bring to 14 the total number formally selected during the first two years of the project (two of which have deferred implementation because of their inability to commit the necessary resources to the program). Thus, the program's objective of providing follow-up and selecting additional districts was achieved, although more systematic follow-up support may be needed.

PROVIDING IN-SERVICE TRAINING

The proposal specified that districts signing Implementation Plans would each receive three days of on-site orientation by project staff. Such training was given in 1986-87 to eight replicators. Thus, project staff did achieve their training objective.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

According to the project director in 1986-87 technical assistance was beginning to take place on an informal basis within the three areas of admissions, guidance, and curriculum. Technical assistance has largely come in response to questions that have been raised during training sessions. Because most of the training sites are small, technical problems are generally minor and are considered to be part of the overall monitoring process. Questions directed at C.A.S. staff by replicator districts have mainly concerned the way student selection should take place, the extent to which in-house or specialized classes should be offered, and the degree to which teachers should be in the field or in the classroom. Therefore, the technical assistance objective was met in an informal manner.

TURN-KEY TRAINING AND MONITORING

Because awareness activities, contracting, and scheduling of training sessions continued to be the focus of the replication process in 1986-87 and because project staff determined that replicator districts were still very much in the initial stages of implementing the C.A.S. model, turn-key training was delayed once again. The director stated that the proposal had proven unrealistic in its timeline. As noted previously, monitoring has taken place with first-year replicators to a small extent, however comprehensive monitoring activities have still not been implemented and materials for evaluating replicating programs

implemented and materials for evaluating replicating programs need to be developed. For these reasons, these objectives were deliberately delayed to the 1987-88 project year.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During its two years in operation, Implementation Plans for 14 districts were signed as a result of C.A.S. awareness activities. Staff training was conducted for all of the replicating districts.

Partially in response to last year's O.E.A. recommendations, C.A.S. was able to develop a broader geographic balance in its selection of replicators and consolidate trips in order to reduce the amount and extent of traveling. While project staff attempted to draft objectives that were more realistic and appropriately sequenced, the project was still unable to meet two inappropriately sequenced objectives.

Second-year activities were more realistically assessed in terms of staff time because of the addition of a full-time director. The reorganization of the staff pointed toward increased efficiency. In support of this improved staffing pattern, C.A.S. submitted and received a "Continuation Grant" for fiscal year 1987-88. This N.D.N. grant will fund a larger dollar amount for the director and an increase in per session funds for clerical staff.

A recurrent problem that project staff have begun to rectify is the degree to which district Implementation Plans were binding. Contracts had appeared to be relatively loose statements of intent that districts could renege on too easily thus wasting resources invested in the training process. By

working more directly through state facilitators, C.A.S. staff have found greater "readiness" on the part of potential replicator to adopt Implementation Plans.

The following additional recommendations are offered for future project operations:

- Program administrators should attempt to impress upon their B.O.E. supervisors and grant project manager the importance of resources to develop a systematic monitoring plan to evaluate and assess replication efforts. They should develop standardized evaluative materials that can be applied to all districts to assess the progress of the programs.

- C.A.S. staff should develop an informational packet of training materials. Resources utilized in sessions should be pulled together and made more public and accessible.

- Appropriate C.A.S. and replicator staff should formulate a formal plan for providing systematic technical assistance and "turn-key" training to specified target districts assumming that appropriate resources can to allocated to this activity.